

91598R



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Level 3 Social Studies 2025

91598 Demonstrate understanding of how ideologies shape society

Credits: Four

RESOURCE BOOKLET

Refer to this booklet to answer the questions for Social Studies 91598.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–11 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

YOU MAY KEEP THIS BOOKLET AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

THE EFFECT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON NEW ZEALAND POLITICS

Examples of ideologies

Capitalism	The idea of an economic system in which private individuals or businesses own capital goods. From a capitalist perspective, the value of social media lies mostly in the engagement it can generate, especially through advertising. The relationship between social media and capitalism describes how social media use has become the most important aspect in political campaigns.
Consumerism	The idea of promoting the mass consumption of goods and services to achieve happiness and fulfilment. It involves individuals and businesses using persuasive techniques, such as targeted social media campaigns, to influence consumer behaviours by channelling people's wants, needs, and desires into purchasing decisions. This socio-economic ideology shapes consumer perceptions and creates demand through strategic promotion and advertising.
Democratic	The idea of citizens participating not just in voting, but in public debates, discussions, and peaceful protests being important parts of society. Each of these is a form of participation that helps keep people informed when it comes time to make decisions. A democratic ideology also believes that when there is no access to places where critical discussions can be held, this directly affects the efficiency of accountability in a democracy.
Populism	The idea of ordinary people feeling that their concerns are disregarded by those who hold the power. Populist politicians often use strong emotional appeals, including public discontent, to stir support. Because social media algorithms are designed to promote content that gets strong reactions, emotional and controversial messages spread more quickly and widely. This helps populist ideas reach more people and grow in influence.

Social processes

Social processes are the means by which culture and social organisation change, or are preserved. For example, social processes are evident in the following:

- legislative and political reform
- changes in cultural and behavioural norms
- shifts in business practice
- evolving community practices
- demographic change.

INTRODUCTION: Social media and its impact on politics

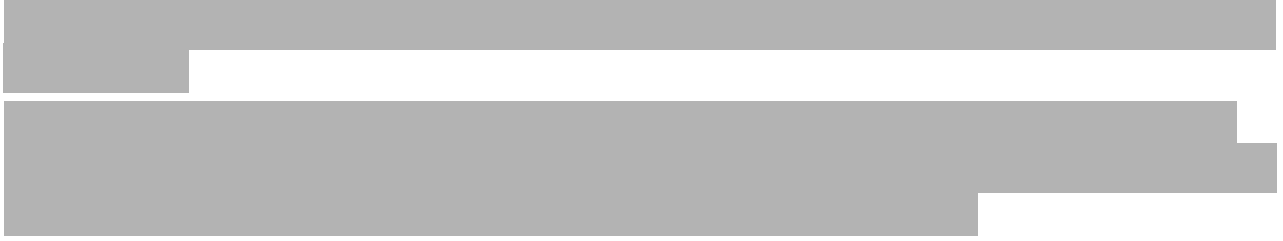
When it comes to politics, the internet and social media are generally seen as disruptive.



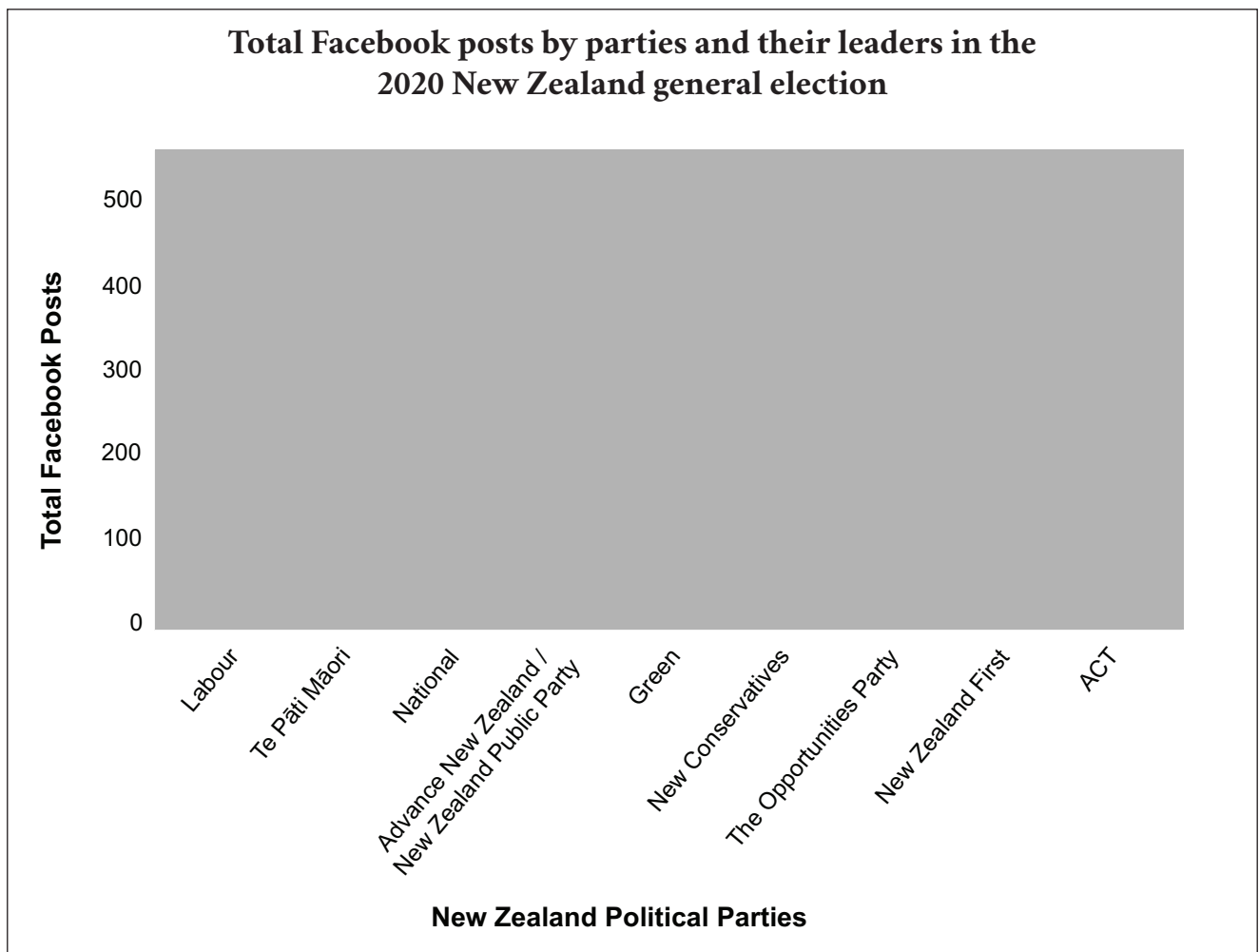
People's views of social media as a way to spread awareness or effect change are additionally related to how they see democracy. The beliefs that social media is effective for influencing policy decisions and for bringing issues to the attention of elected officials or the public are especially common among people who also believe they have a say in politics.

RESOURCE A: Facebook campaigns

New Zealanders use the internet for diverse activities, including sharing political opinions and engaging with others online.



Online social media tools can be an effective way to easily engage with the community in an environment where people feel comfortable, and where little effort is required to find Members of Parliament (MPs).



In the future, the level of online engagement with the public is likely to rise as more people access these sites, and their use becomes the norm.

However, effective use of online social media requires effort to actively engage with the online community, such as through online dialogue and seeking feedback, rather than simply making announcements similar to media releases.

RESOURCE B: Going 'negative'

The latest results from the New Zealand Social Media Study show which of the two big parties went 'negative' during the 2023 general election.



However, on social media, positive campaigning currently still outweighs negative campaigning.

RESOURCE C: Digital threats to democracy

According to new research, New Zealanders are less sceptical of information shared by people they know and trust and may be more likely to stay silent in conversations about social and political issues online if they think their opinions are unpopular.



“The problem with misinformation and disinformation isn’t just that people might believe it, it’s that people might stop believing all of the good quality content online – that’s really damaging to the population as well,” she said.

RESOURCE D: Social media algorithms

In the battle for votes, these days it's not just about airtime or hoardings. It's also about followers and what's trending.



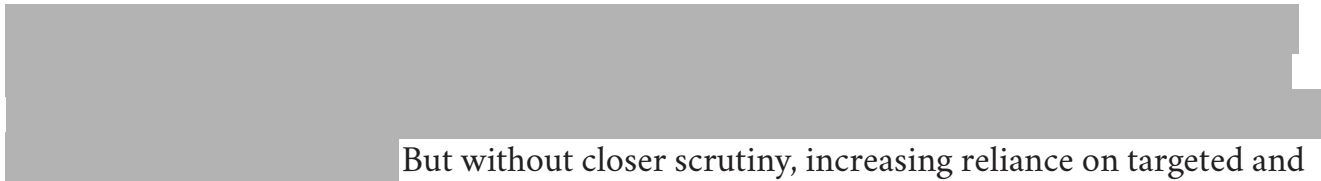


“That’s healthy because it just means that awareness goes up – you know, that all these parties are actually competing.”

RESOURCE E: Spending driving elections

The 2023 electoral donation figures show that Labour, the Greens, and Te Pāti Māori received a combined total just exceeding \$2,900,000. Meanwhile, the National, ACT, and New Zealand First parties, expected to form a government following the release of the final vote tally, received more than \$14,450,000.

The impact of social media may be getting stronger

Some may see social media spending as a reasonable extension of campaigning, but online tactics have implications for social cohesion.



But without closer scrutiny, increasing reliance on targeted and unregulated social media in New Zealand campaigning will damage the “IRL” (in real life) ability to agree on what is true tomorrow.

RESOURCE F: Youth engagement

According to 2025 research (Meltwater/We Are Social), 79.1 per cent of Kiwis are active social media users and they spend an average of two hours and three minutes on social media networks each day, making it a powerful medium. But with 5.03 million individuals using the internet in New Zealand at the start of 2025, with 96.2 per cent household penetration, not everyone is engaging online. The growth has been on platforms with a younger audience, notably TikTok, which are yet to be conquered by political communications. The typically fast, satirical, and interesting information format on such platforms is hard for politicians to generate.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Young people want to see that their vote matters and that it can lead to tangible change that benefits them and the society they live in.

RESOURCE G: New Zealand ‘under-prepared’ for election interference

In the lead-up to the United States 2020 election, there was a lot of chatter about foreign operations aimed at influencing the elections.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

“You can’t stop them trying; you can make yourself a hard target,” he said.

Acknowledgements

Material from the following sources has been adapted for use in this assessment (accessed 13 March 2025).

Ideologies

Page 2: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/capitalism.asp>
<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/what-capitalism-is>
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<https://www.populismstudies.org/digital-populism-the-internet-and-the-rise-of-right-wing-populism/>

Introduction

Page 3: <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2022/12/06/views-of-social-media-and-its-impacts-on-society-in-advanced-economies-2022/>(text)

Resource A

Page 4: <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/hppi/psir/psir-research/election/facebook-campaign-communication> (text and image)
<https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/hppi/psir/psir-research/election/Are-New-Zealanders-getting-a-positive-election> (text)
<https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/research-papers/document/00PLSocRP11021/new-zealand-parliamentarians-and-online-social-media> (text)

Resource B

Page 5: <https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/news/2023/10/negative-campaigining-in-the-2023-new-zealand-election> (text and image)

Resource C

Page 6: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/technology/social-networking/112626064/social-media-influences-new-zealanders-opinions-on-politics-and-hurts-democracy-study-says> (text and image)

Resource D

Page 7: <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/a-threat-to-democracy-concern-social-media-algorithms-could-skew-election-results/R7ZENUWHSZCYRNJFZX6DGA2Y6U/> (text)
<https://www.gadgets360.com/how-to/features/facebook-profile-picture-guard-add-a-design-tools-how-to-use-1715779> (image)

Resource E

Page 8: <https://www.thebigq.org/2023/10/20/is-social-media-spending-driving-elections-in-new-zealand/> (text)

Resource F

Page 9: <https://socialmedia.org.nz/nz-social-media-statistics-2018/> (text)
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Resource G

Page 10: <https://newsroom.co.nz/2020/09/22/nz-underprepared-for-foreign-election-interference/> (text)

